

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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Volume 01; Issue 08

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Wednesday, May 30, 2007



Jefferson, 6, and Jonny, 4, (who has autism) stand at entrance to Burton Valley Elementary in Lafayette

Photo by Jennifer Wake

Special Education Needs By Jennifer Wake

There is a growing shortage of qualified special education credentialed teachers and support staff in public schools – according to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing – and there is a declining trend in both the number of individuals taking the CBEST and in the number of candidates enrolled in teacher preparation programs.

Yet, according to a recent report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the number of children diagnosed with autism served in public schools under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has increased by more than 500 percent in the last decade. Six million children ages 6 to 21 received public special education services in 2005, and that number is closer to seven million today – with a large percentage of those students attending classes in California.

Kathryn Stewart, clinical psychologist and executive director of Orion Academy in Moraga, a nationally-recognized college preparatory high school for children with Asperger's Syndrome or Non-verbal Learning Disorder that targets both individual social needs and academic excellence, says the problem "is big, big, big."

"The reality is there's a huge problem in the state of California about what services are there, and who is trained to do it," Stewart said.

...continued on page 5

Serving the New Student Population of Autism

Cal Shakes Day Draws a Crowd to Theater Square

By Lee Borrowman



Cal Shakes actors perform at Theater Square

Theater Square was the place to be last Thursday, May 24, as fans of the California Shakespeare Theater joined a large cadre of officials from the City of Orinda and representatives from the Chamber of Commerce to welcome Cal Shakes and its new satellite ticket office and theater store to Orinda. Artistic Director Jonathan Moscone addressed the crowd, Cal Shakes staff mingled with guests, and actors treated the audience to a lively short performance. The event kicked off the new partnership between Cal Shakes and the City of Orinda, as part of an effort to revitalize the area.

Mayor Steve Glazer invited Orinda Intermediate School students



OIS students delight the crowd

Photo by Tod Fierner

and principal Michael Randall on stage as he recognized OIS and the Cal Shakes Artistic Learning Program.

This spring, artistic residencies were held in all of the OIS 7th grade core classrooms. On June 5th, the entire 7th grade will attend a Student Matinee

performance of Richard III, and will receive in-class visits from Teaching Artists to prepare them for seeing the show. Student performers were rewarded with a big round of applause from appreciative spectators.

...continued on page 4

Governor Schwarzenegger visit to SMC

By Jennifer Wake

No Traffic Tie Ups Expected During

Governor's Visit to SMC

Traffic is expected to be unaffected during a visit to Saint Mary's College by California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on Saturday, June 2, according to college spokesperson Debra Holtz. Although security will be heightened during the governor's visit to SMC, where he will speak at commencement ceremonies for the School of

Extended Education, no road closures are planned.

Only ticket holders will be admitted to the commencement ceremony which begins at 10:30 a.m. in McKeon Pavilion following a Baccalaureate Mass from 8:30 to 9:40 a.m. in the Chapel. A reception will follow at noon in the Soda Center.

5th Annual

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Roadside Displays Symbolize Traffic Safety Struggle

By Steve Angelides

Roadside memorials to young people killed in motor vehicle accidents have become all too familiar a site in Moraga. So far this year there have been three tragic deaths, each of which was followed by a roadside memorial. Two displays within a few blocks of each other on Moraga Road last week symbolized Lamorinda's ongoing struggle with traffic safety.

At the corner of Moraga Rd. and Devin Dr. stood the colorful memorial to Ryan Holt. Holt, a Moraga resident who had just turned 20, died after an accident at that location on May 18. According to preliminary information provided by the Moraga Police Department, he lost control of his motorcycle, crossed into the opposing lanes, and was struck by an approaching vehicle.

The roadside memorial to Holt included a large poster board filled with pictures and e-mail and handwritten messages. In front of the poster board were many bouquets of flowers and a few candles which had apparently been lit during the night. Holt's nickname was "Rye Bread," and several loaves of rye bread were also part of the memorial. The memorial drew a steady stream of visitors last week.

A few blocks down Moraga Rd., near Rheem Blvd., was the Moraga police van. On the side of the police van was a large "Slow Down, Lamorinda!" banner. On the morning of May 21, passers-by noticed something unusual about the police van's banner. Vandals had painted over the "Slow Down" and in its place had scrawled "Speed Up."

Moraga Police Chief Mark Ruppenthal said the police have information on individuals who may have been involved in the vandalism and will be speaking with them. Moraga Mayor Mike Metcalf would like to know why anyone would do such a thing. "Whatever the reason," said Metcalf, "it suggests that something is seriously wrong."

Banners, signs and bumper stickers are part of the education and outreach component of the "Slow Down, Lamorinda!" 12-week traffic safety campaign being conducted jointly by Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda. The campaign also includes targeted speed enforcement, and Moraga Police Sgt. Julie Valdez notes that there is "definitely an increase in enforcement activity in non-target areas as well."

Lee Borrowman contributed to this article.



The memorial to Ryan Holt on Moraga Rd



The vandalized Slow Down banner

Photo by Steve Angelides

LAMORINDA WEEKLY this week

Town news page 2, 3, 4
Life in Lamorinda page 5, 6, 7, 11, 13
School news page 9, 10

Restaurant Guide page 12
Sports news page 14-15
Love Lafayette page 16

Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

Lafayette

Calendar

City Council 7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room
500 St Mary's Road
Monday, June 11

Planning Comm. 7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room
500 St Mary's Road
Thursday, June 7

Design Review 7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room
500 St Mary's Road
Tuesday, June 12

Park, Trails, Rec. 7pm
Community Center
500 St Mary's Road
Wednesday, June 13

Circulation 7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room
500 St Mary's Road
Monday, June 4

Emergency Prep. 9:15am
City Offices
3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite 265
Wednesday, June 13

Senior Services 4pm
Community Center, Alder Room
500 St Mary's Road
Thursday, June 28

Youth Services 6pm
Community Center, Elderberry Room
500 St Mary's Road
Monday, June 11

check online:
Town of Lafayette:
<http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us>
for:
• all meeting notes
• calendar updates
Chamber of Commerce:
<http://www.lafayettechamber.org>
for:
• local businesses
• upcoming events



Possession of Dangerous Drugs, 5/19/07 Driver, a 37-year-old male, was pulled over after committing several vehicle code violations. A check showed the suspect was on probation. A search was conducted and methamphetamine was found in a ziplock baggie.

Vandalism, 5/18/07 Unknown suspect scratched swastika onto vehicle engine hood. Victim is Jewish, but doesn't have any suspected enemies. A check of the neighborhood showed no other vehicles damaged. Neighbors didn't see or hear anything.

D.U.I., 5/18/07 Traffic stop along Mt. Diablo Boulevard of a white female age 24, at 1:21 in the morning. Officer checked suspect's driving status and found no California Driver's License in her name. Blood alcohol level above the legal limit.

Lafayette Road Work

By Lee Borrowman

The City of Lafayette is completing its annual slurry seal of selected road surfaces. The sealant is applied to roads to prevent water from penetrating through the cracks, thereby extending the useful life of roads that are otherwise in relatively good condition. City staff report that they received several letters from curious residents who wondered whether this work was related to the upcoming ballot Measure C, which would institute a 30-year parcel tax to provide additional funding to repair or replace some of Lafayette's decaying roadways.

City Manager Steve Falk explains, "We have two types of roads that are in need of repair. There are the roads that are so old and damaged that they have to be completely torn up and replaced," as with the roads that would receive such treatment should Measure C succeed on June 5, "and then there are the roads which, with a little preventive maintenance, such as slurry seals, can last for many more years." Falk says that these routine measures are, "the most efficient way to spend the taxpayers' money."

Funding for the slurry seal project comes each year from the city's General Fund, from which \$1 million is appropriated annually for the road and drain maintenance program. Opponents of

the proposed parcel tax argue that taxpayers should not bear the burden of funding the more extensive repairs, but that the city should find other resources from which to pay for any necessary work. The position of the city, and of the many other supporters of the measure, is that there are no other resources available to make up the difference between the estimated \$42 million in total repair costs and the \$18 million that the city has identified in funding sources.

Some have suggested that the road repairs that have been in process over the last few weeks were timed badly by a city that holds strong hope that voters will approve the parcel tax by the required 2/3 majority. Falk says, "I'm not interested in politicizing our streets. This work needs to be done now whether there's a ballot measure or not." Road maintenance work takes place in Lafayette and many other communities, such as Orinda, annually at this time of year. "Had we waited until July or August (after the election), the cost to the city (to have this work done) would have been much higher. And the idea of not doing any maintenance this year was unthinkable." Doing routine maintenance now, concludes Falk, "is efficient, it's good public policy, and it's good government."

Webcam of Lafayette Library Construction

By Cathy Tyson

Want to take a peak at how construction of the Lafayette Library is progressing? There is a webcam positioned for that very purpose. According to Ann Merideth, Lafayette Community Development Director, "The installation of the camera was requested by the State Office of Library Construction, so that construction could be monitored remotely from Sacramento. The webcam will be in operation until the Library

opens." Bessie Condos, Bond Administration, Library Facilities Consultant is the lucky civil servant who will be "watching to monitor progress." She also notes that it's a good way to keep the community updated and generally people are excited to watch. Feel free to spy, www.csipm.com/webcams_lafayette.html. At the moment, you'll see a big hole in the ground with a retaining wall.

A Calm Evening at The Crosses

By Sophie Bracinni

At a peaceful Memorial Day event Monday evening, an estimated 250 people gathered at "The Crosses" in Lafayette.

There was live music, and many participants joined in singing songs, some dating back to the Vietnam era, such as "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" Several speakers addressed the crowd, including the hillside's owner, Louise Clark, and Chris Danton, one of the organizers of the Crosses installation.

A heartfelt speech was given by Gold Star mother Nadia

McCaffrey, who lost her son Patrick in the conflict on June 22, 2004. She talked about her grief, her fight to try to make sense of her loss and her latest project, a non-profit organization called Veterans Village. Veterans Village provides support services to veterans when they come home (for more information go to <http://veteransvillage.org>). Moments of silence allowed



Chris Danton addresses the gathering

those at the gathering time to reflect and remember the ultimate sacrifice men and women in the military have made for our country.



Jerry Overaa Photos provided

All in the Family

Overaa Construction Celebrates Centennial

By Cathy Tyson

It all began back in 1907 when Carl Overaa started doing small remodeling projects for friends. He had only been in the country for five years, having left the family dairy farm on a fjord in Overaa, Norway. Since then Overaa Construction has grown and expanded into a \$180 million dollar volume company with a reputation of quality work, run by third and fourth generation family members.

The generation explanation is fairly straightforward. Founder Carl Overaa had two sons; Elmer who was tragically killed in a car accident and Clarence. Clarence had one son, Gerald, (Jerry). Jerry has four children, Carl, Kara, Julia and Erin. All but Julia work at the company in different capacities, as well as sons in law Colby Powell and Bryan Dissman. According to Jerry, there may be work for the 13 grandkids, when they're old enough, "but they'll have to earn it."

"We're aware, that it's pretty rare, having the same ownership," says Jerry. Carl adds, "...by being a very local, family-based business with a long track

record, we are viewed as a safe bet, a stable firm, sincere and honest." They aren't kidding when they talk about being local, Jerry was in one of the first graduating classes at Miramonte, and all of the fourth generation "kids" went to Acalanes.

"I don't think I'm tough, but demanding," reflects Jerry on his style as a boss. Daughter Kara, mother of four and part-time Marketing Manager partially agrees. "Yes, he's tough. He has high expectations, but is very fair." According to son Carl, there's no family rivalry at the firm because, "everyone has a different expertise, responsibility." Although father usually knows best, there have been differences of opinion especially with regard to new technology. "Trust me, guys, there's a better way of doing this," says Carl about generational differences.

Jerry adds, "This generation are very hard workers, it makes it easy for them to blend in and be accepted." When reflecting on traits the entire family shares, "Clarence was almost modest to a fault, conservative, very self-effacing. Even the 13 grandchildren - they are all pretty

slender, pretty blond, and reasonably quiet with a modest humility."

"I'm very fortunate to work with my family, and have the opportunity to work with my best friends," says Kara. The downside can be the family dynamic, "you go in with a lot of history. My parents always encouraged us to work there (Overaa), but never forced us. Do what you love, was their advice."

Recently Overaa Construction had the winning bid for the new Lafayette Library. "This is probably the largest project Lafayette will undertake. Very complicated building, technologically complicated, tough site and it has almost museum quality construction. One of the toughest buildings we've ever built," notes Jerry.

Overaa is also currently working on the Mercantile Building and relatively recently completed the Orinda Library. Over 30 years ago they completed the Lafayette BART station, and because of the quality of their work, they went on to do 15 additional BART projects.

...continued on page 5.

"Who's Watching You?"

A Town Hall Meeting

Presented by the Lafayette Crime Prevention Commission along with the Lafayette Emergency Preparedness Commission and the Lafayette Police Department

Date: Tuesday, June 19th, 2007

Time: 7:00PM-8:30PM

Location: Lafayette Community Center
500 St. Mary's Road
Manzanita Room

This is your opportunity to discuss the issues you care about. Join your neighbors in an informative and insightful exchange of ideas. Learn how to start a neighborhood watch program, neighborhood emergency preparedness and CERT (Community Emergency Response Teams) training.

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Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

Moraga

Calendar	
City Council	7:30pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School 1010 Camino Pablo	
Wednesday, June 13	
Planning Comm.	7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive	
Monday, June 4	
Design Review	7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive	
Monday, June 11	
Fire Board	7pm
Fire Station 1280 Moraga Way	
Wednesday, June 20	
Park & Rec	7:30pm
Hacienda, Mosaic Room 2100 Donald Drive	
Tuesday, June 19	
Liaison	8:00am
Fire Station 1280 Moraga Way	
Friday, June 8	
check online: Town of Moraga: http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us for: • all meeting notes • calendar updates	

Contentious Construction Consumes Commission & Council Clocks

By Steve Angelides

A contentious construction project on Draeger Drive consumed four hours of time of the Moraga Planning Commission and Town Council last week.

Last Monday the Planning Commission spent almost two hours before deciding that the guest unit constructed on that property included a deck. The Town's Design Review Board had specifically prohibited a deck when it approved the project. Commission Chair Bruce Whitley summed up the views of the commissioners when he said, "If it looks like a deck, and quacks like a deck, then it's a deck."

The applicant, Mike Raff, claimed that the disputed surface was only the roof of a pool equipment shed. However, because the surface was accessible from the guest unit through a sliding glass door, and bordered

by a three foot parapet wall (which Raff claimed was only a fence) the commission decided it was a deck.

The commissioners gave Raff some advice on how to eliminate the deck, namely to replace the sliding glass door with a window, and remove the parapet wall. Raff will have the opportunity to submit a compliance plan before the matter comes back on the Commission agenda.

Last Wednesday the Town Council took over two hours to decide that the construction of a concrete retaining wall on the Draeger Drive property had materially altered the grade and therefore required administrative design review. The question originally on the agenda, whether the wall was a nuisance, became moot because the contractor removed the backfill from behind the wall before the meeting.

An Open Letter from Moraga Mayor Mike Metcalf: Time to reflect and act


At mid-day Friday, May 18th, a young citizen of our town died from injuries when his motorcycle collided with an oncoming automobile on Moraga Road. This is the third fatality of the year and challenges the notion of Moraga as a safe place to live. Since May 1st, the three cities of Lamorinda have been engaged in an aggressive campaign to slow traffic in the tri-city region. Yet these tragedies continue, and it's apparent many folks aren't taking our safe driving message seriously. Since January, Moraga police have issued 656 traffic citations and, more frightening, 36 for driving under the influence of alcohol. Many of these arrests have involved under-age kids. During the first two weeks of Slow Down Lamorinda!, some 75 stops were made in the tri-city area for speeding, and these after speed trailers had been operating on the same roads for several preceding days. Just this past

weekend in Moraga, a young lady, who was DUI, luckily escaped serious injury when apparently she became disoriented and crashed her vehicle into a closed metal road gate. And we are only five months into the year!

It's time to think carefully about what's going on. All of us need to reflect on our own behavior when driving a motor vehicle, and encourage our family and friends to do the same. When we drive unsafely — or if we shouldn't be driving at all — it's not just ourselves who are at risk; others on the road are also endangered, even people who just happen to be nearby. It's time for some straight talk, perhaps around the dinner table, maybe in our meeting places, or just in

casual conversation. It's time to remind each other that our lives may be lovely right now and we may be happy at the moment, but that it can all go horribly wrong in an instant.

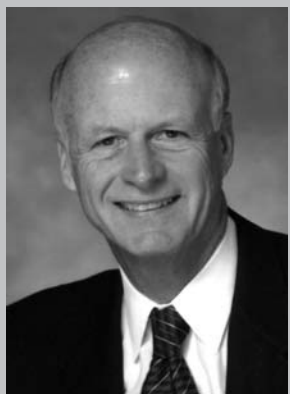
As part of our Slow Down Lamorinda! campaign, a large banner was prominently displayed last week on a police vehicle parked at the intersection of Moraga Road and Rheem Blvd. On Monday morning, it was discovered that vandals had spray-painted over the lettering and written in bold letters: "Speed Up Lamorinda!" This is sick. What kinds of people could have done this? Our police can't possibly patrol everywhere and stop every such senseless act. It's time for each of us to ask what we can do individually and together. Please do your part.



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D.U.I., 5/19/07 Female St. Mary's College student reported to have been involved in a traffic accident had been unconscious prior to being picked up by Campus Public Safety Officer. She was allegedly involved in a solo traffic accident with the metal gate barrier at the east end of Alta Mesa Drive; blood alcohol level was one and a half times the legal limit.

Unlicensed Driver, 5/18/07 The driver of a large commercial vehicle was stopped at Moraga Road and Woodford Drive, for failing to yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk. It was found that the driver was unlicensed. This was the second time the driver had received a citation for driving without a license.

Counterfeit Cash, 5/16 - 17/07 Campolindo Cafeteria Cashiers received 3 counterfeit \$10.00 bills on 5/16 and 1 on 5/17/07. There was no record of who passed the fake bills, or which cafeteria cashier had received the bills. Officers collected said bills and placed them into evidence.

Tri \$14K!

The first annual Moraga Treeline Triathlon, held on April 28, raised approximately \$14,000 according to Moraga Parks and Recreation Director Penelope Leach. The proceeds will be divided between the Moraga Parks and Recreation program, the Hacienda Foundation, and the Soda Center. Leach notes that the event received valuable support from some of Moraga's community service organizations.

Volunteers from Kiwanis and the Community Emergency Response Training program began placing traffic cones at 4:00am and the Moraga Women's Club arrived to set up the venue at 5:00am. CERT volunteers also provided safety monitoring along the bicycle route during the event. In all, 75 volunteers helped to make Moraga's first such event a great success.

Focus on Roads:

Camino Pablo Repaving and Moraga Rd. Rebuilding

By Steve Angelides

Moraga focused on roads last week. The Town Council awarded a contract for repaving Camino Pablo, and two Town committees met to discuss rebuilding Moraga Rd.

Last Wednesday the Council awarded the Camino Pablo contract to Bay Cities Paving and Grading for \$1,167,100, using rubberized asphalt concrete. The work is supposed to be completed before school starts in August.

Last Thursday the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee and the Beautification & Tree Planting Implementation Committee held a joint meeting to discuss rebuilding Moraga Rd.

Last September the Beautification Committee presented a conceptual plan whose key feature was reducing traffic to one lane in each direction from Donald Dr. to Corliss Dr. In January the Town Council charged the Beautification Committee with implementing its conceptual plan, with its "first order of business" being to "obtain a traffic

study to show that no backup would result" from the proposed lane reduction.

In June, 2008, the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) plans to install a new water pipe in the middle of Moraga Rd. beginning at the Town's border with Lafayette, down Moraga Rd., and then up Draeger Dr. to the reservoir. According to Police Chief Mark Ruppenthal, "EBMUD plans on having Moraga Rd. destroyed" for this construction.

Mayor Mike Metcalf said EDMUD will then have to rebuild Moraga Rd. "If they're going to have to rebuild it," Metcalf said, "we might as well have them rebuild it the way we want it." To take advantage of this and other possible opportunities, Metcalf suggested that the Beautification Committee develop a fully engineered plan for rebuilding Moraga Rd. from the Lafayette border to St. Mary's Rd.

Although many committee members nodded in agreement

with Metcalf's idea, Beautification Committee member Jim Kline questioned whether it would be consistent with what was supposed to be the committee's "first order of business." Metcalf responded that the committee would have to persuade the Town Council, and suggested that the recent traffic fatality may have changed the political climate. "Consider that you just had another fatality on that very stretch of road," Metcalf said. "What do you think the political mood is now?" Beautification Committee member Christine Kuckuk answered the Mayor's rhetorical question. "We're ready to go now," she somberly replied.

Planning Commission Nixes Oversized Second Story Addition

By Steve Angelides

After a lengthy public hearing with over 40 neighbors in attendance, the Moraga Planning Commission refused to approve a second story addition to a home on Kinston Court.

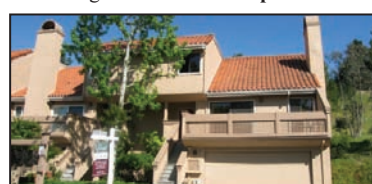
The proposed addition was about 200 feet larger than allowed by the Town's guidelines, and would have made the house the third two story house in a row, also contrary to the guidelines. During the discussion a majority of commissioners indicated they might approve the

project if its mass was reduced and the second story was centered over the first story, rather than being lined up with the rear of the first story.

When asked after the meeting whether he would be willing to scale the project down and center the second floor over the first floor, the project's architect, Hampton Hancock, said that decision was up to the owners. "But if they want to do it I would love to do it."

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Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

Orinda

Calendar	
Special City Council 5:30pm	
Auditorium, Orinda Library	
24 Orinda Way	
Wednesday, June 6	
City Council 7pm	
Auditorium, Orinda Library	
24 Orinda Way	
Wednesday, June 6	
Planning Comm. 7pm	
Auditorium, Orinda Library	
24 Orinda Way	
Tuesday, June 12	
Public Safety 7pm	
Library May Room	
26 Orinda Way	
Thursday, June 14	
Park & Recreation 7pm	
Community Center Room 2	
28 Orinda Way	
Wednesday, June 13	
Historic Landmarks 3pm	
Garden Room, Orinda Library	
26 Orinda Way	
Tuesday, June 26	
Liaison 8:30am	
Room 7, Community Center	
26 Orinda Way	
Monday, June 4	
check online:	
Town of Orinda:	
http://www.ci.orinda.ca.us/	
for:	
• all meeting notes	
• calendar updates	

Orinda Sees Increase in Credit Card, Identity Theft

By Chris Lavin

Orinda has seen such an increase in identity and credit card thefts that officials have had to remove the paper recycling bins from the post office.

"You wouldn't believe what people throw away," said Lily Cleope, officer in charge of the Orinda Post Office. "They throw away credit card renewals, everything. Anyone can take them."

Such easily available material for would-be thieves has led to a "definite increase" in criminal activity, Cleope said. And while identity theft – when a person's personal information such as Social Security number, home phone number and address are used to gain credit in order to buy things under another's name – and credit card theft are different crimes, one can lead to another.

"You just don't want your personal information in a recycling bin," Cleope said. "If the customers would just take their mail home it would save a whole lot of problems."

Orinda police have noticed

such an increase that the office recently published a pamphlet informing consumers what to do if their credit or identity is compromised, and advises Orinda residents on how to prevent it. It is available free at the station at 14 Altarinda Road.

"One of the biggest cases we had was a lady who got a resident's Social Security number, opened up an account at a different bank and the resident didn't even know about it until she got a statement in the mail," said Paul Rives, assistant to the chief. Orinda residents who find they have been burgled by credit card or identity theft are asked to come and file a report at the station. Officers then ask a volunteer to work on the case to find out how a card was used, and when.

"Credit card theft is one of the most common thefts we see," Rives said. Ice cream parlors are a popular destination for credit card thieves, for some reason, he said, "but then they might go buy a plasma screen TV 20 minutes later."

According to Rives, the department is working with area merchants to use surveillance cameras to track down suspects who used a stolen card at a particular time and place.

"It takes a lot of time," he said. Cleope said she has seen an increase in the number of thefts from home mail boxes, as well. Rives agreed. "There is lots of expendable income here," he said. "There are people out there trying to take advantage of the people we have."

Cleope is working with her delivery staff to keep an eye on residential houses. "We know when people are on vacation, so we can call the police if we see something suspicious," she said. Both Cleope and Rives recommend caution.

"You know those credit cards that you must activate from your home phone?" Cleope asked. "I heard of a woman who got a flower delivery – this person had dressed up like a florist delivery person and got some flowers – but when the customer said it must be a mistake, the delivery

person asked to use the phone to call the florist and check the address. The woman let her in, and she went in and activated a stolen card from her home phone number. You just don't know the ideas these people come up with."

Rives recommends making a label for the back of credit cards asking merchants to check a photo ID before completing a purchase. "And come by and pick up a pamphlet," he said.



Lily Cleope with "left behind mail" Photo by Tod Fierner

Cal Shakes ...continued from page 1



Cal Shakes Artistic Director Jonathan Moscone

As visitors milled around on the warm spring evening listening to a live performance by Bob Athayde and Friends and enjoying beverages and hors d'oeuvres provided by some of the Square's restaurants, many were struck by the suitability of the Square for such events. Chris Quiett, representing GLL Properties, Inc.,

which acquired Theater Square last year, commented, "We're planning a weekly summer performance series, possibly on Thursday nights, that would start in June and run through September or October."

The Cal Shakes season starts this week with Richard III. Opening night is Saturday, June 2, following preview performances on Wed/Thur/Fri. To view this summer's calendar of Cal Shakes performances at the Bruns Amphitheater, including special events such as "Meet the Artists," "Behind the Scenes," and "Tasting Night," go to http://www.calshakes.org/v4/tickets/calendar_r3.html. Tickets can be purchased on-line or at the new Theater Square outlet.

Cal Shakes wants you to know that kids can enjoy Shakespeare, too! Cal Shakes summer camp moves from its former home at the Bentley School to the Orinda Community Center this year. Cal Shakes Artistic Learning Coordinator Emily Morrison described the camp; "The kids spend the morning in acting classes, which include fun things like physical comedy and stage fighting, and get to participate in Masters Classes taught by our actors. In the afternoon, they rehearse and later perform a shortened version of a Shakespeare play." Campers will also receive a free ticket for each of the four Cal Shakes main stage productions this summer. Moscone thinks the camp is a great opportunity for kids because, "They acquire so much confidence when they find out that they can do it – they can understand Shakespeare!" For Cal Shakes summer camp information go to <http://www.calshakes.org/v4/educ/camps.html>.

'Fireside Chat' to Tackle Allergy Solutions

By Chris Lavin

Empty shelves where the allergy medicines used to be in local drug stores are testament to this season's unusually harsh allergies. Sporadic rain followed by hot days caused blooms to pollinate in abundance, leading to watery eyes and stuffed sinuses.

But one holistic doctor in the East Bay recommends not immediately rushing to the drug store for relief. There are many other options, says Dr. Jay Sordean, of the Redwood Clinic in Berkeley.

Sordean will be the featured speaker at the Orinda Library's "Fireside Chat" series from 7 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, June 26

when he speaks about "Natural Solutions to Allergy Problems: A Holistic Approach."

"We'll be talking about the prevalence of allergies and their symptoms," said Sordean – including food allergies. "Stress can exacerbate or be the underlying cause of allergies." He will speak of ways to alleviate both, including herbal remedies, vitamin therapy, exercise and acupuncture. The Orinda Library's "Fireside Chat" series is held on the last Tuesday of each month at the library on Orinda Way. Call 925-254-2184 for more information.



Arson, 5/22/07 Dos Encinas. Victim set out trashcans Monday night. In the morning, victim found cans burned to the ground, "puddles of plastic." Neighbors didn't see or hear anything.

Arson, 5/21/07 Edgewood Road. Unknown suspect set homeowners garbage can on fire by unknown means. An area check was done for the suspects with negative results.

Other Felony, 5/20/07 Kitiwake Road. Suspect, an ex-boyfriend in his 50's, entered his 52-year-old ex-girlfriend's house, and threatened to kill her new boyfriend.

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Life in LAMORINDA



Special day classes like this serve pre-school students with autism
Photo by Jennifer Wake

... continued from page 1

Autistic students are entering school districts beginning at age 3 at an annual cost of \$18,000 per student (three times that of typical students), according to the Special Education Expenditure Project (SEEP). Districts are strained by these added costs and are scrambling to find qualified teachers that meet federal guidelines while staying within their budgets.

"We've shot ourselves in the foot as a state by making hoops that are impossible for people," said Stewart, who received her master's in special education and taught special education at the high school level before starting Orion. "You have good people who look at [the credentialing process] and think 'Why would I go to all this trouble to make \$40,000 a year?' They're not going to do it, so that becomes another problem. There's no easy solution."

David Krapf, Saint Mary's College director of teacher credentialing, recently joined 25 education professionals, service providers, and par-

ents of special needs children in a state-wide special education credentialing workgroup. The workgroup is coordinated by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and is examining the structure and content of the current credentialing program.

Under the current structure at public schools, special education credentials are categorized as mild/moderate and moderate/severe and only those with moderate/severe credentials are authorized to work with autistic children. If someone has a mild/moderate credential and is considering being placed with students on the autistic spectrum, Krapf says they would first need to come back to get their moderate/severe credential to be compliant. This would encompass nearly 300 hours of course work as well as one lengthy seminar.

"More people are going into the mild/moderate area than moderate/severe, and that's a significant problem," Krapf said. "But nevermind autism - we don't have an adequate supply of special education teachers, period."

In addition, districts are coming to Krapf asking the college to add a preschool component to their special education curriculum. "Our students are licensed K through 12, so they would need to have a preschool certificate, or we would need to either create a credential or a certificate," he said.

But even with institutions like Saint Mary's offering moderate/severe credentials, it does not change the fact that the current system is broken and needs to be fixed, said Stewart.

"One of the problems in our high schools is we've lost track; we've gone for what's cost effective," Stewart said. "And in the public high school, you have public high school teachers who have no idea how to manage autistic or Asperger's kids in the classroom. It's not a money issue with Lamorinda schools. At the administrative level, these districts' people get it, but training is still an issue."

Special education classrooms in California used to be divided by each student's needs - communication disorders, specific learning disabilities - but Stewart says that doesn't happen anymore. "It's an unfortunate shift because you have special day classes now in public high schools where this whole group of kids is lumped together."

Stewart suggests creating small learning communities where kids of like learning would be together. "There are a lot of people out there who have very different views than I have. I am absolutely against the concept of mainstreaming," she said. "It doesn't work."

Overaa Construction ... continued from page 2

"In the next hundred years we'd like to continue to build upon our reputation within the industry. Build upon our integrity as a family run business. We want to be the commercial contractor of choice, and the employer of choice. We have a very long term horizon." Not surpris-

ingly, Jerry has no plans for retirement.

Overaa Construction has come a long way from the 1926 contract to build Richmond High School, where carpenter's received a 10% raise to \$1. per hour. In 2002, a new office building was constructed to accommodate

its 200 employees. The full service firm specializes in the following: parking structures, water and waste-water treatment facilities, religious facilities, seismic retrofitting, educational, recreational and healthcare facilities, and finally science and technology projects.

Local Musician Takes a Hike

By Sarah Henningsen



Paul Caccamo



Photos provided

We all have that wild dream of simply packing our bags and taking off for a break from reality. Lamorinda resident Paul Caccamo is doing something along those lines.

The only catch is that he's been preparing throughout the past several years for the trip of a lifetime—a five month backpacking endeavor across the 2,650 mile Pacific Crest Trail, which runs from the Mexican border up to the state of Washington. Since departing at the end of April, Caccamo has hiked a significant number of miles and enjoyed the rewarding, though physically demanding, journey.

Paul Caccamo was at one time a student at Campolindo High School; now, a teacher and accompanist at his alma mater. A longtime citizen of Lamorinda, Caccamo is extremely involved in the music scene in the community both at school and through his plethora of piano gigs in the area. For the past nine years, he has worked at Saint Monica's Catholic Church in Moraga as a pianist for the weekend masses, and most recently, as a leader for the Church of Rock youth band and choir. Considering his love of

music, Caccamo's decision to spend many weeks away from the piano and in total wilderness may seem implausible. Before embarking on his journey, he explained his reasoning in wanting to complete the Pacific Crest Trail: "For quite some time I've been feeling the desire to check out of our mechanized and digitalized existence. Cell phones. Car stereos. The neighbor's Harley at 7 AM on Monday. I could use a break from all this noise. That's one reason I'm going. Five months of quiet. I want to at least figure out what to do with the rest of my life, but I won't even think about it until August."

Hiking the entire Pacific Crest Trail is no small feat—it is estimated that only 300 people attempt the "thru-hike" each year, with only 75-100 finishing the entire trek. However, with extensive backpacking and camping experience under his belt, Caccamo is more than prepared for the undertaking. Since his first solo hike in 2001, he has completed various hikes in the Bay Area, the Sierra Nevada, and even Wyoming. Fortunately, he will be joined by two of his closest friends for this particular journey. As Caccamo

commented, "We have already traveled many miles together and with any luck it will soon be many more."

The Pacific Crest Trail itself features many scenic locations of interest for hikers and nature aficionados, passing through famous national parks like Sequoia, Kings Canyon, Yosemite, Mount Lassen, Crater Lake, and the North Cascades. Caccamo mapped out his journey: "The Pacific Crest Trail will be my main route, but there are several side routes, particularly in Oregon, which I will take. The important thing is to walk the whole way, not to be on the exact official trail the whole time. Outside of the parks we'll visit multiple wilderness areas. We'll be in the desert and in the high alpine regions and everything in between."

Until October 1st, when he expects to complete the hike and return to Lamorinda, Caccamo will be sorely missed by his numerous friends and students. He has agreed to drop the Lamorinda Weekly a quick note every now and then, as he will have internet access roughly twice a month. Look forward to reading updates about this incredible journey.

The solution?

Some education experts suggest four main changes: More support for research on treatment effectiveness; more targeted assistance for professional development offering grants for colleges and universities to create specialties in autism; school district willingness to set up state-of-the-art programs to serve children with autism; and getting parents involved in early intervention.

Until then, Stewart suggests changing the goal: "Our goal as educators should be to create the very best adults we can create."

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Life in LAMORINDA

Surviving Boot Camp

By Cathy Tyson

I had imagined camouflage pants and a bullhorn. In reality the instructor for my first day of class was wearing the latest in stretchy athletic gear and looking very fit. It wasn't long before I was panting and dripping with sweat, one recent morning at the Moraga Commons. It seemed like a good idea, sign up for Boot Camp, see what its really like, and write an article about the experience. For yours truly and every other "camper" I met, the unanimous feeling is that its definitely challenging, but in the end, very rewarding. Which is the whole point.

Instructors, Tim Hill, Liesbet Bickett and Martin Sadalski are great about encouraging one's best efforts and offering alternative moves, on the off chance it gets too difficult, say for a middle-aged reporter. They really know their physiology, so can offer informed advice and pre-workout stretching for injured or post-surgery classmates. Kelly Price, one of my

partners in sweat says it best. "I wanted something that gave me a good jumpstart to lose the weight, feel stronger and have more energy. What I've realized is that when you begin to truly concentrate on yourself, take the hour to work hard and understand your goals, life becomes so much more authentic. Tim and Liesbet are so inspiring because they live each day exactly how they train and teach. Their energy, attitude, and work ethic are contagious!"

"When I spoke to Liesbet about my goals, she genuinely took the time to take me grocery shopping and show me healthier food alternatives. Those experiences have been priceless."

"You leave each workout feeling like you just conquered a mini-marathon. I have definitely lost weight and gained strength, but the best feeling is the pride you get deep down inside from staying committed to something that felt so hard to begin with."

Deb Witmer, a 55 year old

participant had signed up for five months worth of classes and recently bought a pass that allows her to take additional classes for the balance of the year. "I just feel terrific, I have so much energy all day." Although there were moments when it wasn't always so pleasant. "Golly, I'm sore – but only occasionally, usually after the interval training." She's lost 26 pounds.

"For me," says Julie Luckenbach, "boot camp is something healthy that I can do for myself in those precious moments we Mom's have between dropping the kids at school, unending chores and picking up the kids again."

Independently owned and operated by Tim Hill and Liesbet Bickett, Contra Costa Adventure Boot Camps had their first class in June of 2006. Prior to starting the business, the couple, who met on Match.com, had extensive backgrounds in exercise and athletic competition. The camp itself is a four-week outdoor program of fitness instruction, nutritional coaching and motivational

training. Participants can chose from three to five days per week, starting at \$199. The next sessions are starting soon in Lafayette, Moraga, Walnut Creek and beyond.

"My idea was not to train people in the gym but to train them outside and show them that the natural gym is so much more fun, and that exercise was about loving and discovering the power of yourself, not putting in your hour at the gym because you have to," reflects Liesbet about her philosophy. Included in the program is a free nutritional seminar, also available for an additional fee are: the Clean Cupboard Makeover in your home, and The Clean Food Makeover by Cindy Gershen owner of Sunrise Café, and prepared healthy meals by OrtoGo.

At the moment, I don't have abs of steel, but I'm working on it.

For more information call (925) 457-4587, or www.contracostabootcamp.com



Instructors Tim Hill in white T-shirt and Martin Sadalski in black T-shirt facing camera. Photos by Andy Scheck

Pain is weakness leaving the body
No bad weather, only bad clothing
Mind over matter – if you don't mind, it doesn't matter
Make life a mission, not an intermission
I don't carry my weight, my weight carries me



Enjoying the obstacle course with fellow campers at the Moraga Commons.

Lamorinda Puppy Raisers Give of Selves for Great Cause

By Jennifer Wake



Cindy Sevilla, walks throughout La Fiesta Square with Guide Dog trainee, Margie. courtesy of Cinda MacKinnon

When Orinda resident Cinda MacKinnon first signed up to raise puppies for Guide Dogs for the Blind three years ago, she envisioned training part-time, while working from home.

She soon learned that turning a little puppy into a working dog – one that a blind person eventually will entrust with their lives – is not an easy task.

MacKinnon, and her husband Tom, dedicated 18 months to socialize Rhapsody, a golden retriever who recently graduated and was partnered with Matthew Friend, who is not only blind, but deaf as well. Because of his disabilities, Friend did not take many walks

before he had Rhapsody, but now he walks everywhere.

Following Rhapsody's graduation, the MacKinnons continued be part of the puppy raising team by babysitting for other guide dog puppies.

"It's a lot like having a baby," MacKinnon explained. "You can't leave the dog in the house to simply go to the cleaners; they need to be watched all the time." Puppies are trained to behave as they would with a blind person. They are taught to relieve themselves on a leash, for example, since a blind person will have to relieve the dog this way.

Guide Dogs for the Blind CEO, Bob Phillips, explained that you teach the puppy to be-

have under certain circumstances.

When Rhapsody was only 8-weeks-old, the MacKinnons began training her to sit, to stop chewing on furniture, to not eat food off tables – basically learn un-puppy-like behaviors while she was "working."

"Our work is to socialize in every instance: at work, at home, at the grocery, on trains or BART, at restaurants," MacKinnon said.

Since a lot of the socialization training happens outside the home, MacKinnon and her puppy raising leader, Lafayette resident Cindy Sevilla, rely on Lamorinda businesses to help. Fortunately, business owners in the area have been very open to them.

"Amarin Thai Cuisine in Lafayette has let me train every

puppy I've had, and Clocks, Etc. has been fabulous letting us in," said Sevilla, who has trained 13 puppies over the past eight years. She is constantly on the lookout for socializing opportunities for her 8-month-old trainee, Margie.

"It's important that dogs don't rush up stairs or run down stairs," Sevilla explained, as she walked Margie steadily up and down stairs throughout La Fiesta Square in Lafayette. "Initially, Margie would charge upstairs, so I've done a lot of body blocking (blocking Margie's rush upstairs by squeezing her between the wall and Sevilla's legs)."

She also takes Margie on elevators, and is teaching her to sleep under the table at restaurants or under desks at work. Her entire family gets involved. Sevilla's husband, Al, has

taken puppies to work with him. Her three children, Ginger, Sean, and Hayley, take puppies to work, to school, or to the gym.

After socialization training, the puppies return to Guide Dogs for the Blind for 10 weeks of intensive training, which includes things like teaching dogs to look for overhead obstacles that might injure their partner – an incredibly difficult task, considering the anatomy of the animal. Those wanting dogs also go through a rigorous application and training process before being partnered with a guide dog.

Guide Dogs for the Blind is fully supported by private donations. It offers everything from transportation to room and board, including training and all its support services free of charge to the blind or to the visually impaired student.

The organization recently

began the K9 Buddy program for blind children who are too young for guide dogs.

"The child learns about the human-animal bond," said Phillips, whose daughter is blind. "They are partnered with a dog that might be perfect in every way, but are not yet ready to guide. Parents might view a dog as another distraction, but they have never seen a well-behaved dog.

Some children partnered with a K9 Buddy, Phillips noted, can take the dogs to school, making it easier to meet people and make friends.

"We have shifted our focus to a broader way of thinking of the impact when we partner a guide dog with a blind person; the natural interdependency we place between guide dogs and their partners," Phillips said.

...continued on page 11

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Congratulations Lamorinda Teachers of the Year!

Yvonne Anast, Mathematics, Orinda Intermediate, Orinda

"This is my first time (receiving the Teacher of the Year recognition) and I am very honored," said Anast. "I feel happy that I have been able to make a connection with my students."

Anast thinks that the award will only enhance the learning experience of her students.

"My students have high expectations and I know that I will need to continue to provide them with a solid foundation and a keen understanding of math in order to be successful in high school, college and life," said Anast. "I wish for each of them the love of math and the ability to use [it] where they see fit."

-N. Lossing

Scott Turner, 3rd Grade, Burton Valley Elementary, Lafayette

Scott Turner says, "The greatest reward in my profession isn't receiving the best standardized test score. I believe there is no greater reward than seeing a student's self-esteem flourish. Year after year, there are reluctant students that enter my classroom. Some are shy, some feel they are not smart enough to perform in front of their peers, or some are fearful of making mistakes. I work hard to ensure my students feel good about their accomplishments. My reward comes from setting up a healthy environment where my students are more focused on the positive aspects of their peers, and they work together as a team to embrace social and academic growth."

-C. Tyson

Leann Pfeiffer-Nixdorff, 5th grade, Camino Pablo Elementary, Moraga

Children in Ms Pfeiffer's (now Mrs. Nixdorff) class at Camino Pablo remember a very special classroom atmosphere where experimenting and learning with peers felt safe and productive. Ms. Pfeiffer, who has been teaching for 11 years in the Moraga district, is well known by staff, parents and children for her enthusiasm for teaching and the way she prepares children for entering middle school by fostering dependability, responsibility and cooperation. Her love for children and keen understanding of each child's special gifts and abilities make her a perfect recipient of the teacher of the year award.

-S. Bracinni

Molly Henrikson, History, Campolindo, Acalanes Union High School District

Currently teaching both World History and AP European History, Henrikson is well known for her unique approach to teaching seemingly bland topics. By using simulations of historic trials and other fun activities, Henrikson has a knack for connecting both intellectually and emotionally with her students. Upon winning the prestigious award, Henrikson commented, "I feel very honored and humbled by the recognition. The district has many excellent teachers and to be singled out is a true honor. Additionally, I am thankful to have had such wonderfully engaging and challenging students while teaching at Campo - the learning process has been reciprocal."

Ms. Henrikson is a finalist in the Contra Costa County Teacher of the Year competition.

-S. Henningsen



Scott Turner



Molly Henrikson

Volunteers: A Key Piece of Lamorinda School Success

By Andrea A. Firth

There is a machine in Lamorinda that works quietly, 24/7. It requires hundreds of people to run this machine as it labors tirelessly to organize programs and raise funds. What it achieves in return for its efforts is an excellent education for its children. This machine is the parent volunteer community in the Lamorinda public schools—a community directly linked to the success of the school system.

The strength of the volunteer culture in Lamorinda public schools is evident in the thousands of hours parents volunteer each year to support school programs and fundraising efforts. "We have a strong volunteer culture, and the numbers speak to that," explains Erin Bydalek, PTA President at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School (JM). Parents at JM in Moraga and Stanley Middle School in Lafayette logged almost 60,000 volunteer hours over the past school year.

"Without our volunteers, the Lamorinda schools would look very different than they do today," notes Michelle Chan, PTA President at Stanley. Lamorinda

schools receive state funding below the state average, and PTA and parent club funds contribute in an important way to the operating budgets of schools providing Lamorinda students with access to special electives, advanced technology, counseling support, and much more. "Many programs exist in our schools only because of parent support both in terms of monetary donations and time," adds Anne Mitchell, a member of the PTA Board at Stanley. "In addition to supporting the schools financially, volunteers enrich the academic programs and build community," states Michelle Chan. "I also volunteer for me," adds Anne Mitchell, "I like making the school a better place to be, and I like having the opportunity to get to know the admin-

istration and what is going on at the school."

Parents in Lamorinda volunteer at school because they feel that they make a difference. Linda O'Brien, formerly a teacher and school administrator and currently PTA President at Rheem School in Moraga, agrees. "Our volunteer culture is truly what makes our schools different from other schools in California," says Linda. She feels that by volunteering for the school, parents send the message that school matters. "We want to make it the best place it can be. We are willing to put time into it, and the teacher is not alone," she adds, "The parent volunteer support contributes to a child's sense of school importance...It's just a happier place to be.

Stanley Middle School PTA Honorary Service Awards 2007:

Kathy Brio – Honorary Service Award
Michelle Chan – Honorary Service Award
Teresa Geringer – Continuing Service Award
Vangie Long – Honorary Service Award
Julie Lyverse – Very Special Person Award
Cheryl Noll – Continuing Service Award
Lafayette School Board
(Ann Appert, Teresa Geringer, Shayne Silva, David Stromberg and Stephanie Teichman) – Honorary Service Award
Stanley Office Staff
(Linda Murray, Sandy Shaw, Rosamaria Wellman, Judy Ybarra) – Honorary Service Award

Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Honorary Service Awards 2007:

Golden Oak Service Award - Lorinda Cunha
Honorary Service Awards - Eliana Cordero, Judy Kienle (Wilson), Ana Ramirez, and staff members, Patti Forster and Fran Strykowski.
Good Volunteer Award - Julie Penfold, Susan Du Boulay, and Peggy Woehleke.

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In the Footstep of Pioneers

By Andréa Lucacher, 4th grade, Camino Pablo

It was very early in the morning one Monday in May when 3 buses took all the 4th graders from Camino Pablo Elementary on a trip into the past, when gold was first found in California. The 2 hour bus drive felt short. We arrived at an old railroad station near Jamestown.

We went gold panning in the American River. We wore long black rubber boots made for men. We had a round black pan, about 11 inches in diameter, flat bottom, and the sides were about 3 inches high. There was a big pile of soil freshly dug with gold inside. In order to get the gold, you fill your pan with soil then you put the whole pan in the water and wash out all the

dirt, take all the big rocks out, until you see the nuggets. It was very painful to lean over and scoop water from the river.

After the gold hunt, we went to our camp in Silver Spur. 4 big orange cabins are set in a large meadow surrounded by pine and oak trees. There are hills in the back for hikes and a big field to play. A river runs through it, but we couldn't get in. We slept in bunkbeds in the cabins. The classes took turns setting and cleaning up in the dining hall. The food was not what my mom would call "healthy", but it was the kind I love: spaghetti and chocolate cake.

The next morning, we left after breakfast. We went



Camino Pablo 4th graders panning for gold in the American River

to Columbia, an old village like in the 1840's. We visited a blacksmith, a candy shop, a school and a jail. But my favorite part was taking a ride in a horse carriage. I sat on top and it was unbelievably bumpy but fun! We were attacked by a robber, he had a pistol and he asked me for my gold earrings. My dad had to fight with him... just kid-

ding! It was simply fake. We came back in the afternoon. I think the adults had as much fun as us, the children. I felt it must have been very hard work for the adults a long time ago, but I think that children of that time had as much fun in their village as we do in Moraga today.

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How Does Your Garden Grow?

By Lee Borrowman

If you happened to be hanging out in the Garden Classroom at Burton Valley Elementary last week, you might have had the pleasure of watching a small group of special education students experiencing the sensory delights of honeysuckles and snapdragons, or listened in amazement to young voices asking for "More salad, please!" From green beans to chard, if your student attends BVE she may actually be eating her vegetables. And there are many more lessons to be learned in the Garden Classroom.

There are beds in the Garden with such names as Pizza, Salad, Soup and Salsa. Students can visit a Hummingbird Garden, a Butterfly Garden or the new Tops and Bottoms Garden (inspired by Janet Steven's Caldecott Honor book of the same name). Or walk through Central Valley, where food crops grow, and take the California Native Trail that features a wide variety of native plants. On Wednesdays students can spend "Lunch in the Garden," picnic-

ing and helping out with garden chores.

Science teacher Mallory Peirce explains, "The garden was designed from the beginning with curriculum in mind. Because of this, while the garden has been evolving over the past 3 years to include all elements needed to teach the curriculum, we initially developed the lessons to meet the state content standards - not just in science, but social studies and other subjects. Every lesson in the garden either enriches or delivers classroom content."

Peirce's favorite lesson teaches to a 2nd grade standard, "Soil - It's Alive." Soil is made partly from organic materials and partly from weathered rock. Thriving worm bins and compost bins, for both food scraps and plant materials, feature the organic components of the soil. Nothing goes to waste in the Garden Classroom.

Even the storm drain serves as a focal point for a lesson on watershed. Science teacher Laura Lowell takes her



Proud student offers samples 5th grade classes to visit a creek at the beginning of the school year. Then they watch water runoff to the Garden creek go down the storm drain. Back in the classroom, they use maps to trace the path of the water to Las Trampas Creek, where it joins Tice Creek under Broadway Plaza to form Walnut Creek, and moves on through Suisun Bay and finally meets the ocean. The students make connections between water conservation, ecology and the watershed.

The Garden Classroom also serves as an outdoor laboratory for a lesson on pollination. After dissecting a flower in the classroom, students use the gar-



Pollinators at work

den to watch pollinators at work; the Garden is home to hummingbirds, butterflies, bees, small flies and beetles all busily doing their thing. Other classes use native plants such as soap root in their studies of Native Americans.

Support of many organizations, such as the BVE PTA, Soda Foundation, LASF, Intero Realty, East Bay Nursery, Garden Arts, The Water Project, and the Lafayette Community Foundation, and Boy/Girl Scouts have been invaluable. The PTA made possible last year the hiring of garden manager/instructor Kim Curiel. Peirce says, "Having Kim has allowed us to bring children into the garden, on a weekly basis, for activities. She has also expanded the original science/social studies curriculum to integrate nutrition education, art, literature and physical activity." Nearly all of BVE's teachers use the Garden in one way or another. Curiel also encourages students to just quietly observe the Garden. She says, "Their minds really turn on when they see and smell and taste."

WISE: The Senior English Experience option at Miramonte

By Nee-Sa Lossing

WISE is an in-depth interest project, focused on any topic of the students' choice. Seniors who elect this option are enrolled in English 4 for the first semester, and use the vacated time in the second semester to complete their projects. Students collaborate with teacher mentors, whom they choose, to complete reading and research in their area of interest, and work towards their final presentation at the end of the program, which is evaluated for a grade.

"WISE students gain independence, communication skills, organization and planning skills, problem solving skills, and most of all a connection between academic learning and real world experiences in a field they are passionate about," said Mira-

monte teacher Steve Poling.

Students are evaluated frequently, to ensure that they stay on track with their project, which, in turn, ensures them the best possible WISE experience that they can have.

"[Students] are often investigating a career path, developing existing talents, or giving back time and energy to the community. At the end of the semester, students typically have a clear idea of how their interests will play out in their college education or career plans," said Poling.

"Be ready to have a powerful and independent learning experience," said Poling. "Be prepared to work hard, make smart choices, and create your own success."



After Yom Kippur Photo by Julia Zucker

WISE student Julia Zucker

Striving to capture the essence of her subject through the lens, Miramonte senior Julia Zucker tries to create very real and honest messages through her photographs, while still incorporating her own personality. Choosing photography as the subject of her WISE project was a natural decision for Zucker.

"I really like art a lot," said Zucker, "but I don't have the patience to create something like drawing or painting, or even crafts. I think they're just way too hard for me to focus on, but photography lets me capture what I think is attractive to the eye or what I think is moving or important."

In order for her to create photographs that are distinctive and different, Zucker tries to convey her

own emotions through the image.

"How I feel at the moment is always in my photographs," said Zucker. "I like to think I'm very removed from my subjects, which is kind of who I am, in a way. I usually just stand off, and analyze the situation more than actually engage in social activity, I just kind of watch."

To further distinguish her photographic style, Zucker draws inspiration from her life and the world around her.

"My friends influence me a lot, and people around me influence me. Also the other photographers that I take classes with influence me," said Zucker. "I hate to define who I am, but I think that if I can define it in any way, it would be through my photography."



The Hummingbird Garden Photo by Lee Borrowman



Kim Curiel (center) with special ed class Photo by Lee Borrowman

MySpace? Facebook? What's a Teen to do?

By Nee-Sa Lossing, Miramonte High School

Over 50 million MySpace accounts have been created since the birth of the site in 2003, most of them belonging to youth between the ages of 14 and 24, according to: www.collegewebeditor.com.

"It's not okay for teens to spend so much time online, because it really affects people's schoolwork, and people just aren't personal anymore," said Miramonte High School junior Sasha Patpatia. "The other side of that, though, is that it helps you to communicate with people you otherwise wouldn't have met. I've met a lot of cool people with the same interests as me through MySpace."

In recent years, it is obvious

that the social development of teens is no longer restricted to face-to-face interactions. With the increasing popularity social networking sites, such as MySpace, teens' relations with their peers have crossed over onto the internet.

Facebook, another social networking site, used to be exclusive to college students trying to find friends on their own college campuses. In late 2006, though, the site became welcome to anyone with an email address, and has since been growing in popularity among high school students. With about half the amount of members as MySpace, Facebook creates a closer-knit community that is further emphasized by grouping

members together based on the school that they attend.

A major appeal of social networking sites to teens is the ability to create an online personality that will attract other people with the same interests.

"Social networking sites really create situations where you can find friends and groups where you fit in and feel like you belong," said Patpatia. "I think that a sense of belonging is something that every teen needs, and if they find it through MySpace, then that's that."

No matter what, teens will always find a way to create the bonds that they need to develop socially, whether it be online or not.

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ARE YOU RAISING MOSQUITOES IN YOUR BACKYARD?

Submitted by Orchard Nursery, Lafayette

It's never too late to take a look around your home and garden for standing water. West Nile Virus is still a concern where we live and we can all be good neighbors by making sure we're part of the solution. Most folks are amazed at what they find when they actually go outside and take a good look.

We tend to forget about things we tucked in on the side of the garage last winter, or gardening clogs or a wheelbarrow that we left behind the shed or a water bowl for Fido that fell behind the dog house. Here is a check list of places to look:

- Ponds, fountains, birdbaths
- Swimming Pools, spas
- Plastic Wading Pools
- Boats
- Animal Watering Bowls & Troughs
- All Kinds of Empty Containers
- Other Standing Water

Mosquito Facts:

- All mosquitoes must have water to complete their life cycle.
- Only seven days are required to complete their life cycle (egg to adult) during warm weather.
- Mosquitoes do not develop in grass or shrubbery.
- Only female mosquitoes bite to obtain blood.
- Male mosquitoes feed only on plant juices.
- Female mosquitoes may live as long as three weeks during summer or many months over winter in order to lay eggs in spring.

According to the Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District, the owner of a piece of property on which a breeding source is located, is responsible for the abatement and prevention of its recurrence. The District can inform owners of mosquito breeding and assist them in working out a satisfactory correction. In extreme cases, where the owner does not accept responsibility to the public, the nuisance may be abated and a lien filed against the property as provided by the California State Health and Safety Code.

The good news is that mosquito fish, *Gambusia affinis*, are indispensable to mosquito control programs. They eat mosquito larvae as fast as they hatch. You can get mosquito fish for free from the Vector Control Office. Use them for stocking ponds, fountains, unused or out-of-order swimming pools, and animal water troughs. They require no feeding and all you have to do is protect them from garden sprays, chlorine or other chemicals used to clean the pond. The District stocks thousands of these fish in artificial lakes, reservoirs, waste water disposal lagoons, natural creeks, and drainage channels to eliminate the need for frequent spraying with an insecticide. So, be a good neighbor and take a stroll through your garden today!

Visit with representatives from Contra Costa Mosquito Vector Control: Saturday, July 21st, 11-1 pm. Orchard Nursery & Florist, 4010 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette; 925-284-4474
Or you can contact them:
Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control District
155 Mason Circle; Concord, CA 94520; (925) 685-9301
E-mail: ccmvcd@ccmvcd.net
Information from the CCMVCV handout entitled "Are You Raising Mosquitoes in Your Backyard?"



Koi swim happily in the pond



Lamorinda Puppy Raisers

Although both Sevilla and MacKinnon said they started volunteering with Guide Dogs for the Blind to work with the dogs, they now do it for the people as well. "It's all a big community," Sevilla said.

Phillips defines it as the power of partnership to improve quality of life. "We support a lifestyle of cooperation, collaboration and partnership."



Read online at: <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/html/read.html> (a pdf reader is required to view the pages.)

On the Pond!

Orinda's first "Build a Pond Day," hosted by Garden Lights Landscape Development on May 12th, was a splashing success. There were 20 people in attendance; 4 Landscape Contractors, 4 Landscape Designers, 2 (do-it-yourself) homeowners, and 10 landscape laborers and foreman including 5 crew members from Garden Lights.

The seminar began at 9am with nothing more than a hole in the ground, a pile of dirt and lots and lots of rocks in various weights and sizes. Using the professional Aquascape pond equipment and installation system the day ended ahead of schedule at 4:20pm with water flowing down a triple falls stream and into a 13 by 9 foot pond.

Steve Lambert, owner of Garden Lights Landscape Development led the class in what he calls the fine art of water-scaping. "One of the reasons I wanted to hold this training day was to educate people on proper pond design and installation," said Lambert. "A good percentage of our pond business comes from frustrated homeowners who have a failing pond in need of repairs or rebuilding."

Participants received instruction on how to choose the best site for their water-feature and then how to design and layout their pond. Next the crew demonstrated how to properly size and layout the under layer and 45 millimeter pond liner. The liner had to be pushed into several fish tunnels that were dug into the sides of the pond and supported with 12-inch pipes. These tunnels, along with several rock shelves placed below the waterline, provide hiding places for fish that are being stalked by heron. They also serve as a place to cool off for both fish and turtles when the pond is in full sun. After the pond liner had been completely covered with rock and gravel the pond was filled while everyone enjoyed a lunch break in the Lambert's backyard garden.

Around 1:30 construction on the stream and waterfalls began. "I've been collecting special stones that have been kissed by water for about 5 years to one day add to my own water feature," said Lambert. "These rocks serve as the fall rocks and look very natural in the stream." Participants assisted with rock placement from pebble size stones to 700 pound boulders. They also helped place underwater lights in the pond and stream to illuminate the falls from behind. Two bronze Crain sculpture lights were wired and placed at the ponds edge.

When the waterfall was completed a 4000 gallon per-hour pump was installed which pulls the water across the pond then re-circulates it back up to the top of the waterfall.

After the switch was flipped to start the waterfall flowing down the stream and into the pond there were cheers and high fives all around.

The last step was to drain the pond back down to a level low enough to place water plants including; Waterlilies, water poppies, Marsh Marigolds and Louisiana Iris into pockets that were dug during the excavation phase. The water level was then

...continued from page 7

Thanks to organizations like Guide Dogs for the Blind and its volunteers, there are currently more than ten thousand people with vision loss enjoying the companionship and safety of a guide dog.

For more information on Guide Dogs for the Blind, how to volunteer, or to refer a family with blind children or adults interested in services available, visit www.guidedogs.com.

returned to normal and four koi fish were given a new home.

"I've installed hundreds of ponds for clients and finally found a way to make the time to put one in my own yard by making it an educational opportunity for colleges and water garden enthusiasts," said Lambert. "Beside, I was tired of hearing ... when are we going to get a pond? from my wife and two kids."



Moving the special rocks needs a strong arm



Installing the 4000 gallon per-hour pump



The pond is done and the water is running down the triple falls stream

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Hearst Art Gallery

Summer Landscape Exhibition Opens Submitted by Heidi Ehrman Donner, Hearst Art Gallery

Hearst Art Gallery Collections Manager and Julie Armistead have paired two of the most intriguing and gifted contemporary California landscape painters for "Town and Country: Jessica Dunne and Louis LaBrie," the 2007 biennial contemporary landscape exhibition, on view from June 2 to August 12.

Dunne's dramatic, expansive and atmospheric urbanscapes are presented alongside LaBrie's meticulously painted, jewel-like vistas in one of the most visually beguiling summer landscape exhibitions ever presented by the Saint Mary's College art museum.

Noting the complementary views of Dunne and LaBrie, exhibition catalog essayist, San Francisco Art Institute professor and former Artweek editor-in-chief,

Meredith Tromble, observes, "land forms swell beneath the roads in Dunne's works and roads carry LaBrie to his 'untouched' vistas."

"There are similarities in the methods and histories of the two painters: both artists make use of photographs, both have taproots in Photorealist and Bay Area Figurative styles. LaBrie studied with Irma Cavat and Dunne studied with Robert Bechtle, LaBrie worked for a time with Paul Wonner and Dunne has had a long-term friendship with both Wonner and William Theophilus Brown," Tromble said.

"One might imagine that human subjects are free to contemplate 'landscape' or 'country,' before safely returning to 'town.' But nature is a 360 degree system. Belief in the independence of

'town' and 'country' endangers us; their relationship is a relationship we need to understand. By witnessing the environment with their brushes, landscape painters such as Dunne and LaBrie offer a precious opportunity to think about the world today."

A lecture by Meredith Tromble will be Sunday, July 1, at 2 p.m. Admission \$5, free to members.

Julie Armistead will moderate an audience discussion with Dunne and LaBrie at 2 p.m. on Sunday, June 3, in the Soda Activity Center. A reception will follow featuring Bay Area jazz trio Beep! In celebration of the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Hearst Art Gallery, admission to the panel discussion and reception is free.

New "William Keith: The 1880s Paintings" Exhibition at Hearst Art Gallery

The 1880s marked a decade of great changes in William Keith's life, beginning with the death of his wife, still life painter Elizabeth Emerson, in March of 1882. Some of the 1880s paintings show his increasing enthusiasm about a more reflective and subjective approach to capturing the landscape on canvas, attributed to his friendship with Reverend Joseph Worcester and Swedenborgian philosophy, which inspired him to suggest a divine presence inherent in the beauty of nature.

His 1883 marriage to Mary McHenry, attorney and leader of the suffragette movement in the Bay Area was followed by extensive travel: a stay in New York and New England before embarking on a lengthy European trip centering around a Munich sojourn, the addition of European influenced portraiture in his body of work, an 1886 trip to Alaska in John Muir's footsteps, and an 1888 trip with Muir to Lake Tahoe and Mount Shasta.

Although there was a general trend in Keith's painting from tightly rendered detail and bright sunlight to broader brush strokes and darker scenes, the path was not a straightforward one. His work continued to reflect various influences, including his personal predilections and moods, art market forces, interest in the old masters, especially Rembrandt, and allegiances to friends of different art persuasions.

The exhibition opens Saturday, June 2 in the Keith Room at Saint Mary's College. An opening reception is planned for Sunday, June 3 from 2 to 4:30 p.m. at the Hearst Art Gallery. For information, visit the gallery's Web site at <http://gallery.stmarys-ca.edu>.

Welcome to the first Teen Scene column! This one was written by one of our fabulous interns, but we'd like to invite middle and high school students to write one of your own and send it in. You may write on any topic that interests you, but please use appropriate language. Send columns to: schooldesk@lamorindaweekly.com. We'll need your name and grade, and your home phone number. Oh, and feel free to suggest a new name for the column!

Teen Scene column

Teen Scene: Summer School By Nee-Sa Lossing

Sun, beach, vacation, sleeping in, late nights. These are all things that most teens associate with the word "summer." Although I'm a teen, I don't associate these words with summer. Not this summer, at least. For me, Summer 2007 is not going to be the stereotypical sunny, beach-y, vacation-y, well-rested, party session that I had hoped, and that is all thanks to summer school.

I've never attended summer school before. I always thought that I never needed to, but since entering high school, I've realized that attending summer school for advancement is not something uncommon. When you go to a school as academically competitive as mine, it's almost encouraged, because, really, the more classes on your transcript, the better.

When I first told my mom that I wanted to sign up for summer school, she said something along the lines of, "Nee-Sa, you know you'll have to be in Lafayette at 8:00am, right?" I only live ten minutes away, but those are still ten minutes that I wouldn't be sleeping. I knew that having a jam-packed schedule next school-year would be miserable, and that although summer school would be a drag, it would spare me a lot of stress later on.

As I write this, I'm listening

to Lil Mama's "Lip Gloss," which is, according to MTV's music video show TRL, destined to be a "summer anthem." Let me tell you, this is definitely not the type of music I would usually be listening to. I guess the lurking feeling of the upcoming summer (and summer school) is making me gravitate towards anything that will somehow mask the fact that this summer may be completely horrible.

I have a plan to minimize this feeling, though. I've strategically sprinkled a couple of summer music festivals, trips to amusement parks, movie and book releases, and even a short vacation at the end of the summer into my summer schedule to keep the fun summer vibes flowing among all of the anti-summer vibes emitting from summer-school.

I find that the whole concept of summer school is so ironic. Although some students have to go to make up classes from the previous school year, many students attend by choice. Students already spend nine months out of the year going to school, so why is it that so many students choose to spend their always-waited-for and greatly desired summer vacation at summer school? I don't know. What I do know though, is that I'm determined not to let summer school ruin my summer.



Louis LaBrie "Chimney Rock, Near Pt. Reyes" 2005, oil on wood 9 x 6"

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Tap instructor Susan McCollom leads students in warm-up routine

Local Dance Studio Provides Variety of Opportunity for All

By Anna Eames

From ballet to breakdancing, the upbeat and popular Rhythm Room Dance and Movement Center of Lafayette entails the grouping of several different types of dance, as well as aerobic and toning classes that are adaptable to experience level. This relatively young but steadily growing dance studio provides an encouraging atmosphere as well as a wide variety of classes for everyone from beginner to pre-professional.

Retired professional dancer and current owner of the Rhythm Room Dance and Movement Center of Lafayette, Dianna Rowley opened the studio in its first location, Walnut Creek, in 2000, and has since nearly outgrown her current location in

Lafayette. The studio plans on expanding in its current location very soon, as many teen and children classes are overflowing.

With as diverse an array of experience and intensity levels of students as that of the class options, the studio provides a low-stress environment. They provide training for aspiring professionals, confidence for weekend club-goers, and exercise for those who are ready to leave their StairMaster and treadmill days behind.

The demise of the best fitness efforts often comes due to early disincentives and obstacles. No immediate result, no point. This excuse is officially gone.

With a workout like the Rhythm Room supplies, one wants to go back week after week. It provides an ideal exercise which allows the burning calories, the building of a talent, as well as the relieving of stress in a single hour.

"It's more than just a physical exercise; it's a mental exercise," said Rowley. "It's also a good outlet [and]...a stress reliever. That's one of the main benefits of dance. We have a lot of people who are referred to our studio from psychologists because people need an outlet to exert their energy."

Rowley also strongly encourages people with diabetes, like herself, to get involved in dance. "I am an insulin-dependent diabetic, and my office manager is also a professional dancer and an insulin-dependent diabetic. We want parents to feel safe, if they have a child that is diabetic...in putting them in an active situation," said Rowley. "We know how to handle those situations, and it's really important for young kids who have that

TURKEYS IN OUR BACKYARD: KEEP THEM WILD!

By Sophie Bracinni

Long ago when all the animals talked like people, Turkey overheard a boy begging his sister for food. When Turkey heard this, he shook himself all over. Many kinds of fruits and wild food dropped out of his body, and the brother and sister ate these up. Like in this Apache legend, turkeys have always been associated with our nourishment and there is no question that Thanksgiving would be very meager without them. Yes, we love our turkeys, but not that much when

flocks take over our decks and gardens.

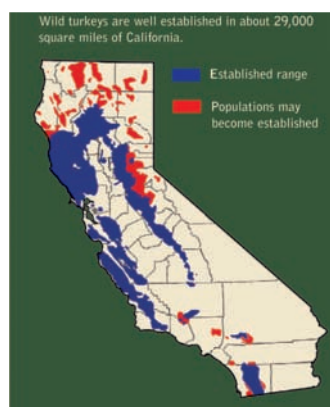
Turkey are not indigenous to our coast of the Americas. Their natural habitat spread from the Canadian border to Mexico, but only in the East. They were imported here for top hunting game. Since then, they proliferated. According to wildlife biologist Gary Beeman, the population is growing extremely fast. There are natural predators to turkeys: bobcats, coyotes, mountain lions and golden eagles. Unfortunately, since turkeys are not native to California, these predators have not registered them on their prey chart. Beeman believes that they will learn.

Why is their presence a problem? Turkeys are omnivorous, just like raccoons. To some residents, they have become a nuisance; so much that a turkey was injured in Moraga recently. Sure, turkey hunting season is opened – for archery the spring hunting season started the last Saturday of March for 51 consecutive days – but it is authorized only with a hunting license and outside of city limits. So if you find yourself with a flock soiling or destroying your property, call the Department of Fish and Game – DFG – and ask for a depredation permit. The department

will send someone to assess the situation and decide if the property damage is significant. In that case Beeman will be contacted.

Beeman holds a pest control license from the Department of Agriculture. If a depredation permit is issued, he will come and catch the turkeys. He has constructed a huge trap that can lure up to 10 turkeys at a time. After their capture, the birds are killed. The turkeys taken under those conditions cannot be eaten. Beeman returns them to nature by disposing of them in remote EBMUD canyons where coyotes and vultures have learnt to recognize his truck and are waiting for the feed. Beeman covers all of Contra Costa County and gets called once or twice a week with a depredation permit.

Hunters will tell you that turkeys are great game. In the wild, they are very smart and allusive birds. They can fly, as high as 100 feet up and for 1/8 of a mile. But those are not the birds we see in our suburbs. The huge bird, member of the quail, grouse and pheasant family, is not afraid of humans anymore in areas where it is not hunted, like in Lamorinda. Some people have taken a liking to them and sometimes even feed them. Kyle Orr, Information Officer at the DFG warns us: "If wild animals have



You Can Help Wildlife Please visit www.KeepMeWild.org access to human food and garbage, they want more and more. They lose their natural fear of humans and can become aggressive." Orr's advice? "Keep them wild!"

Moraga Mourns Another Loss



Ryan Holt grew up in Brentwood and graduated from Miramonte High School in 2006. He was attending Diablo Valley College and working as the assistant manager of the Rheem Theater. According to the Holt family, funeral services were held on Friday May 25 in Brentwood. - S. Angelides

disease to be encouraged and to feel creative, and to build a talent without fear."

The benefits of this type of exercise are complemented by an overall positive and constructive atmosphere. "The Rhythm Room is very encouraging, very positive, so when people come they feel really good," said Rowley.

The studio offers classes in hip-hop, ballet (for students as young as five), belly dancing, salsa, jazz, tap, showgirl, ballroom, and much more.

They also have a unique boys' program which incorporates hip-hop and breakdancing for teens and children.

"[The Rhythm Room] provides a physical workout, it's a spiritual, mental, emotional workout, and it creates a positive energy in people," said Rowley.

Find registration forms, class schedules and a calendar of weeklong summer dance camps for kids online at www.rhythmroomdance.com or at the Rhythm Room Dance and Movement Center, located at 3330 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Mail registration forms to this address or come by and watch classes in session.



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Flexible and feeling fabulous! Healthy advice for those 55+

According to the U.S. National Institute on Aging there are four components to good physical health: aerobic capacity, strength, balance and flexibility. It's no surprise that they have included flexibility. As we age, our muscles and connective tissues begin to tighten which begins to limit movement. This can be from any combination of factors including past or current injuries, repetitive motions from work or other activities, health issues such as arthritis or bursitis, genetics, diet and other lifestyle factors.

Without flexibility, even everyday activities like bending over to tie shoes, zipping up a dress or climbing stairs can be difficult. And activities like golf, tennis or bicycling may become so challenging and painful that they are out of the question entirely. The less flexibility you have, the fewer choices there are for enjoying life.

The good news is that flexibility is relatively easy to improve and the benefits of flexibility training are many: improves range of motion, enhances physical performance and coordination, decreases muscle soreness, prevents injuries, improves circulation, relieves and prevents many causes of back pain, and helps build the mind/body connection – reducing stress. Stretching also helps you feel better in your body and enhances your sense of well being. All of this adds up to more options for movement and activity which means greater satisfaction from life.

A few simple exercises that take only 10-15 minutes a few days a week can make all the difference in the way you experience life! They can be done almost anytime and anywhere and require no special equipment. What could be simpler?

Here are 4 flexibility exercises to help you get started. They are easy to do and at

the same time offer tremendous benefit. As you do these exercises remember to breathe consciously when you practice them. Most importantly don't do anything hurts and don't force yourself to do anything that doesn't feel right. While these are gentle exercises that are suitable for most people, if you have been away from activity for many years or have any limiting injuries you may want to consult with your physician before trying them.

Side stretch on back



Lie on your back with your legs extended. Walk both of your legs a little to the left until you feel a stretch in the right side of your torso. Take your right arm up overhead behind you and stretch through your right arm and out through your finger tips. Take 5-10 deep breaths and then do the other side. Benefits: Stretches the arms, shoulders, sides of torso, lower back and muscles and connective tissues along the outside of the legs.

Cat tuck and dog tilt



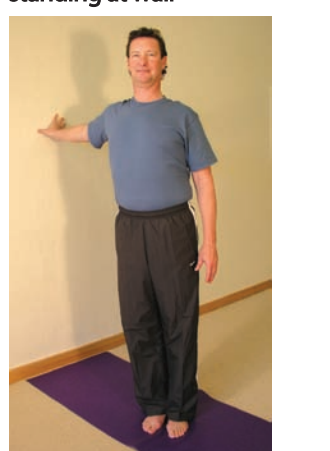
Come onto all fours with your arms directly under your shoulder and your knees under your hips. As you exhale, bring your head and hips towards each other arching like a cat. Lift your belly button up towards your spine, holding for a few seconds. This is cat tuck. Release, inhale and turn your tail bone up towards the sky, rotating your hips over the tops of your thighs. Lift your chest and your head. This is dog tilt. Go back and forth from cat tuck to dog tilt several times. Go slowly and use your breath. Benefits: Improves flexibility in the shoulders, hips, spine and back.

Dog on chair



Place a chair against a wall or on a yoga mat as shown in photo. Standing in front of the chair, place your palms on the chair seat and walk your feet back until they are a little behind your hips. Make sure your arms are in line with your shoulders and your feet are hips width apart. Press your palms into the chair seat and lengthen through your arms and the sides of your torso. Take you hips back a little more. Take 5-10 breaths. Walk your feet towards the chair to come up. Benefits: Stretches arms, shoulders, chest, spine, hips, hamstrings, and calves. Great for lower back.

Chest & arm stretch – standing at wall



Stand with the right side of your body parallel to a wall. Be arms length from the wall. Bring your finger tips onto the wall at shoulder height and turn your hand clockwise approximately 5 minutes on a clock face. Slowly turn your feet to the left until you feel a good stretch in your chest, front of shoulders or arm. If you want more stretch continue to walk your feet to the left. If you want less stretch turn your feet back towards the wall. Take a 5-10 breaths and then do the other side. Benefits: Stretches front of chest, front of shoulders, biceps, forearms and wrists.

Howard VanEs, M.A. is a local wellness writer, yoga teacher and author of Tight Shoulder Relief which can be found on Amazon.com or at www.letsdo yoga.com. Howard offers a free monthly health and wellness newsletter. Reach him directly at info@letsdo yoga.com.

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SPORTS

LAMORINDAS LOCAL SPORTS NEWS



Oakland Strokes Shine at Regional Championships

By Jennifer Wake

The Oakland Strokes rowing team, which includes many high school athletes from the Lamorinda area, wrapped up their 2007 rowing season with medal results evenly balanced between all teams at the Southwest Regional Junior Championships May 19 and 20 at Lake Natoma.

The varsity and novice crews brought home four silver medals for the women's third Varsity-8, women's Frosh-8, women's Frosh-4 and the men's Novice-8. Four bronze medals went to the men's Varsity-4, women's JV-8, men's Lightweight-4 and the women's Novice-8 B crews.

Women's head coach Ian Simpson was proud of efforts he witnessed by the entire women's varsity crew. Despite a few disappointments, everyone worked extremely hard throughout the season, maintaining an intense desire for constant improvement. Simpson was especially pleased with the medal winning finishes of his 3V-8 and JV-8 boats.

The silver medal winning 3V-8 was coxed by a steely Celena Chan (St. Ignatius), who kept her crew on pace in a battle to the finish against Marin. Jennifer Zitterman of Miramonte played a key role in the stroke seat, helping the Strokes come in second with a time of 07:29:01.

Oakland Strokes women's Freshman-8 squad, which is filled with talented athletic women, dominated the competition throughout the season. Coxswain, Molly Fehr (Miramonte) skillfully commanded her crew for 2,000 meters, with Kelly Bauer (Miramonte) follow-



The Men's Lightweight-4 all smiles at the awards podium

ing her lead in the stroke seat. Dana Walsh (Miramonte) was next, followed by Gia Hallaman (Miramonte), Nikki Dahlberg-Seeth (Miramonte), Charlotte Horsey (Head Royce), Nicole Sung-Jerczek (Piedmont), Ann Hofinga (Miramonte), and Joanie Larsson (Bishop O'Dowd) at bow.

In their quest for the gold they were outpaced by an impressive crew from Pacific at 06:56:40. Oakland came in second at 07:00:50 with Marin only seconds behind at 07:02:90.

Oakland's men dug deep and pulled out an exciting medal-winning finish in a race that was neck-and-neck down to the final meters. With the no-nonsense Leila Pakawongse (Berkeley) in the coxswain seat, the team pulled long and strong to stay with the pack.

Miramonte High senior, TJ Laher, rowed to precision in the stroke seat followed by Joe Wainwright (Bishop O'Dowd), Nick Hoff (Berkeley), Cole Masse (El Cerrito), Monte Melnick (Orinda Academy), Michael Luecker

(Campolindo), Richard Colby Foote (Encinal) and James Lenczowski (Miramonte) at bow.

Head Coach Dan Donoho was inspired by how the crew transcended their abilities out on the race course. Although the team never set a specific goal to win a medal or to get to the nationals, Donoho said they remained determined to do better than their last effort every time they entered a race. The strategy worked and the team was thrilled to qualify for the nationals with men's Novice 8-A finishing second with a time of 06:47:80, and men's Varsity-8 finished third with 06:14:90.

By medaling at the regional championship, these eight teams have earned the right to compete at the National Championships to be held next month in Cincinnati. Oakland Strokes in one of the premier junior rowing programs in the nation. For information about the Oakland Strokes upcoming summer camp program, visit the OS website at <http://www.oaklandstrokes.org>.

OBA Pinto League Sluggers Take Win

Submitted by Laura Dorma

In a nailbiting finish to their May 15 game, the OBA Pinto League Sluggers slid past the Bombers in the last inning to finish 25-22. The Bombers' strong offense was slowed when Sluggers PA Casey McGonigle got two outs at first, and fielder Jimmy Ricksen made a stunning

catch at the bottom of the fifth for the third out, leaving the Sluggers to enter the last inning 22-24. In the last inning, McGonigle's triple was accompanied by singles from Carter Supple, Emerson Smith, and Mike Dakis, who had earlier hit a home run, and the inning was crowned with a

home run by Jake Hassard, handing the Sluggers their 25-22 victory. Triples by Sluggers players Jack O'Melveny, Marky Presten and Stephen Schmidt were key in the early innings, and Sam Foss and Ethan Fischler contributed skillful fielding throughout the game.

Tough Loss for Acalanes Softball

By Kevin D. Shallat

The Acalanes Dons softball team had a lot of things going for them coming into a first round North Coast Section playoff game against the Las Lomas Knights on Tuesday, May 22.

With plenty of success against the Knights this year as they completed the regular season sweep against Las Lomas, the Dons had also scored 11 runs in the regular season against the same Las Lomas pitcher they faced Tuesday, Hannah Port, and had home field advantage in this year's NCS playoff game. But none of these factors helped the Dons in their NCS match-up against the Knights - they lost to Las Lomas 6 to 2.

It didn't take long for the Dons to put a run on the board when Acalanes standout player Yvette Dickson hit a fielder's choice to the shortstop in the bot-

tom of the first to score a run and record an RBI. Dickson has filled in nicely since replacing injured catcher, Sara Stenson, who has since moved to the designated player and first base positions.

Las Lomas shortstop Lauren Desino hit the second of back to back doubles in the top of the third inning to score the Knights' first run of the game. Acalanes did their best to respond by hitting the ball hard. Dickson hit a hard shot to center that was caught. Ashley Borrelli also hit a hard liner to left field, but came up empty.

Starting pitcher Haley Ward showed her maturity and patience in the top of the fourth inning. She gave up an initial hit and walked the next batter. Ward persevered through this initial adversity by forcing the next three batters to ground out or pop out.

"Ward is essential to our

game," said teammate Yvette Dickson, who said Ward did what she could to try to help the Dons win.

Ward pitched a tremendous game through four-plus innings. Soon after the top of the fifth had begun, head coaches Rory Ward and Victor Silva made the move to bring in number 10, Katie Gray, to pitch the rest of the way.

Las Lomas went on to score three runs in the fifth, and two runs in the sixth, and finish the day with six runs scored.

Two seniors did what they could for the team in their final game with Acalanes. Hannah Frascieri went three for four, while recording a double and a run scored. Sara Stenson also contributed, going one for three at the plate on the day.

"Normally we're good hitters," Dickson explained. Although Acalanes needed more runs to win, but they nearly matched Las Lomas in hit production - the Knights with 10, the Dons with 8.

Coach Rory Ward said the team fought hard but just didn't have enough energy to produce as well as they could with runners in scoring position. "We haven't scored many runs lately, which makes it hard to win games," Ward said.

Acalanes Baseball On A Mission

By Kevin D. Shallat

The Acalanes Dons baseball team had an important first round game in the North Coast Section playoffs Friday, May 26. With a home field advantage, the No. 1-seed Dons beat the Encinal Jets in a combined shutout, 7-0.

The Encinal baseball team tried their best to find the right attack against the Dons on Friday. Starting with small ball play, by hitting soft grounders to the right side to try and advance the runners into scoring position, the Jets soon shifted tactic, going for big home runs as the score widened in the Dons' favor. Fortunately for the Dons, the Jets never found a happy middle ground, and struggled to find a rhythm throughout the rest of the game.

The star of the game was undoubtedly Acalanes starting pitcher Mike Guglielmo. "Mike's been our gritty competitor all year long. He's fearless," Acalanes Head Coach Andy Tarpley said. Guglielmo pitched six strong innings of shutout ball, giving up only three hits in the process. "The thing about Mike is that he wants the ball in big games. He throws strikes with his fastball and curveball at any time in the count," Tarpley said.

Zach Boyd was the starting pitcher for the Jets. He struggled with his com-

mand early in the game. In the second inning he hit the first two batters, paving the way for the Dons' big inning.

After Boyd hit the first two batters, center fielder Dustin Montero hit a grounder to third. The Encinal third baseman was unable to get the force out. This loaded the bases for Acalanes.

Shortstop Ben Englehart then lined a single to center to drive in the first two runs of the game. He finished the game going two for three, with a run and two RBI's. Second baseman Joe Wallace then lined a shot into left field, driving in two runs of his own on a double. Third baseman Jake Floethe, and catcher Mike Stone would also follow with doubles.

With the game well in hand, Acalanes left fielder TC Lee added a long home run to left field in the bottom of the fifth. "It was nice to see TC hit a big bomb," Coach Tarpley said.



Mike Guglielmo throws a shutout, 7-0.

Photo by Tod Fierner

In the top of the seventh, Acalanes sent in pitcher Donny Miller to close out the game. Miller did a great job by getting three quick outs to end the contest.

As the North Coast Section playoffs continue, the competition gets tougher. Coach Tarpley explained how his team will use this past game to gather momentum for their next opponent.

The Dons will face local rival, No. 5-seeded Campolindo Cougars, at James Logan High School on Saturday, June 2. The exact time is yet to be determined.



Hitting the long ball

Photo by Tod Fierner

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SPORTS

LAMORINDAS LOCAL SPORTS NEWS



Photo by Gavin Schlissel

Lamorinda Swimmers Flex Their Muscles at NCS

By Kevin D. Shallat

Lamorinda fans had a lot to cheer about at the 2007 North Coast Section (NCS) Swimming Championships on Saturday, May 19 when Campolindo, Acalanes, and Miramonte swim teams showed their dominance at Cowell Pool in Concord.

Although Campolindo did not have an individual or team first place finish, they had enough top three individual and team finishes as a whole to garner the Men's overall Championship, with two hundred and twelve points. Marin Catholic finished second and San Ramon Valley finished third overall. Acalanes finished fourth and Miramonte finished fifth, scoring one hundred sixty nine and one hundred forty four points respectively.

The Campolindo team battled all day long, turning out strong performances by seniors Eric Johnson and John Glidden. The men's team finished second in the 400-yard freestyle relay, sealing the NCS Championship for the Cougars.

Since six finalists from the men's team graduated last year, Campolindo's head swim coach Ronnie Heidary expected to have a couple of down years. That hasn't happened, thanks to their over-achieving combination of seniors, juniors, and underclassmen. Eric Johnson (Sr.), Dana Foster (Jr.), and Jeremy Chang (So.), all had impressive first place finishes at their meet against Dublin and Alhambra earlier this year.

"We have the best sophomore class in the North Coast Section," Heidary said. "Our men

support our women's team, and our women support our men's team."

Much of the credit, Heidary says, goes to the Cougar's coach, Dave Schurhoff. A former standout swimmer himself, Schurhoff knows what it takes to succeed. "Coach Schurhoff does an outstanding job of creating a program that kids want to be a part of," Heidary said.

The Acalanes Dons also had a lot of success Saturday. Last year, Acalanes head coach Dan Cottam predicted that senior Nick Ferrif would break the record in the 100-yard breaststroke. Ferrif did not let him down. A young, raw talent, Ferrif took first in the 100-yard butterfly, with a time of 50.62. He also won the 100-yard breaststroke, shattering the 20-year-old NCS record of 56.19, set in 1987, by finishing with a time of 55.90.

Miramonte has a lot to be proud of. They finished in fifth place this year, bettering their 2006 finish by one. They also have one of the more talented swimmers on their team. His name is Max Parrague. According to Miramonte swim coach Don Heidary, (brother of Campolindo coach Ronnie Heidary) Parrague has gotten better every year. Heidary said, "Max is one hundred percent committed, and he did a great job of leading this team."

Parrague had a first place finish in the

50-yard freestyle event in which he turned in a score of 21.15, but stated that this year's NCS was particularly fast. "Last year a sixth place finish for me would probably be a thirteenth place finish at this year's NCS," he said.

And although the Miramonte women's team, as well as the rest of the Lamorinda women, had no first place finishes Saturday, Acalanes women's senior Laura Winn finished second overall in the one meter diving championships on May 17, finishing with a score of 398.30. Acalanes also had their senior, Katie Copenhagen, finish ninth in the one-meter diving, placing a score of 303.85. The next Lamorinda diver to finish was Heather Finertie. She finished in twenty-second place with one hundred twelve points, but she is only a freshman.

Don Heidary said that he is very excited about the development of the women's team, and that he looks forward to tracking their progress next year.



Photo by Gavin Schlissel

Mats Fall to Amador in NCS Playoffs

Submitted by Jim Landau, edited by Jennifer Wake

Ranked number one in Northern California by www.laxpower.com, the largest and oldest lacrosse Web site, Miramonte women's lacrosse came into the NCS playoffs with a 17-1 record and was undefeated in Bay Area competition, having lost only to LaJolla, one of several San Diego area teams which are ranked as the best on the Pacific coast.

Miramonte's record included a win over St. Ignatius of San Francisco, a perennial northern California lacrosse powerhouse. No. 2-seed Miramonte repeated as the Diablo Foothill Athletic League (DFAL) champions this year, defeating each of the other DFAL teams (Acalanes, Campolindo, Dublin and Las Lomas) twice by a cumulative score of 126 to 32.

Other participants in the NCS playoffs were Diablo Valley Athletic League champ Carondelet (seeded No. 5); Foothill (No. 6); Marin County Athletic League champion Redwood High of Larkspur (seeded No. 7); and DFAL runner-up Acalanes, seeded No. 8.

The NCS quarterfinals, where Miramonte hosted MCAL champ Redwood on May 15, was a blow out from

start when the Matador's senior all-DFAL midfielder Christy Sullivan scored the first of her three goals just two minutes into the contest. The Matadors went on to win 18-4, with senior all-American midfielder Lindsay Chan, all-League attacker and senior class president, Allegra Cabellon, and junior Emma Gibson also each scoring three goals. Miramonte's all-League goalie Favienne Howsepian, a junior, had 11 saves for Miramonte. All-League midfielder and senior class vice president Ariel Chin had two goals and an assist to add three points for the Mats.

The NCS semifinals at Miramonte on May 17 pitted the Mats against No. 3-seed Amador Valley, the EBAL runner-up, who Miramonte had defeated 13-7 one month earlier in a regular season contest. No. 3-seed Amador had beaten No. 6-seed Foothill 12-4 in its May 15 NCS quarterfinal game.

Miramonte scored two quick goals in the first five minutes of play, but then the momentum shifted to the visitors, who were passing and running far more effectively. While Howsepian was able to get 11 saves in the game, Amador

scored five unanswered goals in the next 20 minutes to lead 5-2 at halftime.

Miramonte's Sullivan scored as the second half began, putting the Mats within two points of the visitors. But the Mats were repeatedly stymied in attempts to move the ball from their own end of the field by a swarming Amador defense, a complete reversal of the April meeting between the two teams when Miramonte moved the ball easily and ran up an insurmountable 8-1 lead at halftime. About fifteen minutes into the second half of the NCS battle, Amador's senior all-League attacker Ashley Royer scored the third of her four goals in the game and Amador sophomore Kara Bijiess quickly added one of her three scores to effectively put the game out of reach of Miramonte.

The Mats put on a final surge, but it was too little, too late. Amador won, 11-8.

Two days later, in the NCS finals played at the Acalanes field on Saturday, May 19, California High was pushed to the very last minute of play to finally defeat Amador Valley, 11-10, and win their first NCS title with a perfect 21-0 record.

Orinda Academy Has Undefeated Season

Submitted by Mitchell Goldman, Orinda Academy Baseball Coach

The Orinda Academy Eagles completed an undefeated baseball season (5-0) the week of May 18 with a 14-6 victory over East Bay Waldorf at Richmond High School and a 6-4 win over Jewish Community High School at home.

Brandon Davis was the winning pitcher of both games going the first three innings against EBW and the last three against JCHS, and giving up only one run and four hits while striking out 15 batters. OA broke through with five runs in the third against EBW, and then scored multiple runs in each of the next three innings. Brandon,

Dylan Goldman, and Seth Viruet-Krevolin had three hits each and Dylan earned the save pitching the last three innings.

In the next game, JCHS scored three in the first, but great defense kept us in the game. Twice in the inning, David Treas retrieved a hit to left center, fired a relay to Dylan, who then gunned it to Brandon at the plate. After that, starting pitcher, Jeremy Herman buckled down and kept us in the game. In the bottom of the third, Brandon hit a booming home run over a fence in left field to cut the lead to 4-3. Later that inning, David followed with a game-

tying single. In the next inning, Kyle Drewes doubled to give OA a 5-4 lead and Dylan singled him in to conclude the scoring.

Overall, it was a great team effort with contributions coming from each and every member of the team. I am proud of how well they competed, but also how they stepped up when I was injured - nearly running their own practices - and how they pulled together as a team. They truly enjoyed playing and hanging out together and it was a joy to watch them practice and play. Thank you to everyone who supported or contributed to our team.

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